Collectors eager to get hands in (or on) these cookie jars

FREEMAN, Mo. —

Cookie jars are on a resurgence.

And Auctioneer Kent Mickelson — a national King of Cookie Jars — is ready.

On July 12, starting at 11 a.m. at Mickelson Auction Center in Freeman, about 25 miles south of Kansas City, 489 top lots of cookie jars will go up for sale.

Many of the lots come from two collectors with more than 25 years experience in the field, buying some of the rarest and unique jars in existence.

Mickelson, who has been an auctioneer for nearly 30 years, began selling cookie jars in 1995. He expects a good draw at the July 12 sale.

“One of the women has been collecting for about 20 years,” said Mickelson. “She brought in a lot of character cookie jars. And the other consignor is collector Nancy Allen. Many of the lots come from noted cookie jar collector Barbara Crews, longtime editor of the Cookie Jar Digest. The other consignor is collector Nancy Allen.

There’s a lot of action at a cookie jar auction, Mickelson said.

While selling a Shawnee Smiley Clover Bloom for $6,750, a record at the time, he watched an unexpected reaction from the happy consignor.

The Smiley jar came from the collection of the late Ermagen and Earl Westfall, who amassed more than 4,000 cookie jars.

“As the Smiley jar was climbing, Mr. Westfall, Earl, who used a walker to get around, edged up closer and closer to the edge of his chair. When the hammer went down at $6,750, I swear he jumped up and threw his canes, shouting ‘hallelujah’ and danced a jig.”

Mickelson said there may be other such antics, given the quality of the cookie jars. Many of the lots come from noted cookie jar collector Barbara Crews, longtime editor of the Cookie Jar Digest.

The other consignor is collector Nancy Allen.

Highlights include earlier productions including the American Bisque Little Audrey, a Helen Hutula Tat L Tale from the late 1940s and another choice piece from the 1950s, the Regal Drum Majorette.

Wyeth’s windows meant to awaken viewer’s emotions

CALABASAS, Calif. — Three hundred – or so – years from now, how will historians record our current era?

There won’t be handwritten or typed letters from soldiers on the war front. Those are all digital.

There won’t be tangible photographs. Those are in cyberspace. Music, books, even movies – all of our recorded culture – is archived as 1s and 0s.

Material on the Internet doesn’t last forever, at least that’s what I’m told,” Maddalena said. To think that documents in cyberspace will last as See Profiles in History on page 3

Above: Not all letters flatter. Although a literary genius, Ernest Hemingway was fraught with an array of personal problems that may be seen in the archive of eight personal letters, in addition to Life magazine. The letters capture some of his more turbulent moments leading up to his divorce from journalist Martha Gellhorn.

Above: Three of the many highlights in the July 12 Mickelson Auction Center cookie jar sale include a 1950s American Bisque Little Audrey, a Helen Hutula Tat L Tale from the late 1940s and another choice piece from the 1950s, the Regal Drum Majorette.

Above: Frostbitten, 1962. Watercolor on paper. The window became a metaphor for going below the surface, searching for a deeper meaning to realism. (© Andrew Wyeth. Private Collection)
Profiles in History

FROM FRONT PAGE

long as the Dead Sea Scrolls parchment or even prehistoric cave paintings is questionable. It’s just not the same,” Maddalena says. “The best way to read someone’s thoughts is in the letter they write to friends and associates. If you want to know more about George Washington, the best way is to read his letters. Much of the story may be told on how, where or when something occurred. But, to get to the why, the intimate details, and this undistilled part of history, you go to their letters.

During the Civil War when soldiers were fighting eye-to-eye, their letters gave us the horrors of combat, the fear and, many times, the intimate details, and this undistilled part of history, you go to their letters.

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Profiles in History

Maddalena organized his first baseball

antique dealers in Rhode Island, Joseph

insight of our past.”

more precious commodity. Now, today,

to four months, which made the letter a

way, maybe Pony Express. Getting a

months. It probably went by train part

San Francisco could take up to six

slow 100 years ago,” he said. “There was

intimacy – went into the construction of

of their great history is already gone.”

about what they put to paper because it

was not in the stars, so he opened Profiles in

History in 1985. From there, his

inventory grew to include historical
dating from the Revolutionary

War through contemporary world events,
including arts and sciences to U.S.

presidents, aviators, explorers, the Wild

West, business leaders, literature and

Hollywood icons.

“Our (letter) buyers are probably not

as visual-oriented; they’re more

interested in content,” Maddalena said.

They’re probably more cerebral, maybe

higher educated. They know their

material and, I think, they’re more

interested in ownership and stewardship

of a great piece of history. They’re not

collecting as investors.

“Myself, I believe these books and

private letters are relatively undervalued.

There’s really not enough material and,
although discoveries are made, they still

The Washington letter and other

historical lots are part of the fourth

auction of property of a “distinguished

American private collector.” The

collector, who Maddalena said is “a

household name in his industry,” doesn’t

want his name attached to the collection.

“Was concerned that articles about the

collection would be more about him,”

Maddalena said. “He wanted the focus to

be on the collection, not him.”

The 121-page laboratory notebook,

the sale also offers an autographed

manuscript notebook, with

included in the auction are several

letters from Civil War soldiers, several

letters from Ernest Hemingway (giving a

view into his more turbulent moments

including insinuations of debauchery that

would lead to his divorce from journalist

Martha Gellhorn), and other disparate

letters from baseball legend Ty Cobb, third

base coach in 1970, among his three letters and

handwritten notations from Edison, is

October 1927 to January 1928 featuring

experiments for finding alternate organic

sources for the production of rubber

automotive tires, per the requests of industrialists Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone.

The 121-page laboratory notebook,

including handwritten notes from Edison, is

expected to sell for $50,000 to

$100,000.

Included in the auction are several

letters from second President John Adams, Author Samuel Langhorne Clemens in one of his classic 1920s

in pre-auction estimate for this speech

manuscript is $150,000-$250,000.

The sale also offers an autographed

manuscript laboratory notebook, with

sketches, logging Thomas A. Edison’s last

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